



# Parish Grooming Shed



## Decision Memo

Parish Grooming Shed

U.S. Forest Service

Blue Mountain Ranger District, Malheur national Forest

Grant County, Oregon

This decision incorporates all information in this document and included in the project file.

### Decision

I have decided to authorize the activities described in the "Proposed Action" section, including any modifications that resulted from environmental analysis and review of regulatory compliance.

### Applicable Categorical Exclusion and Findings Required by Other Laws

The "Applicable Categories" section identifies the appropriate category/categories for this action, and provides rationale for categorically excluding this action from documentation in an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) and for using the identified category/categories. The "Environmental Analysis" section documents rationale to support my finding that no extraordinary circumstances exist, along with findings required by other applicable laws and regulations to demonstrate compliance with the regulatory framework for the activities authorized by this decision.

### Agencies, Organizations and Persons Contacted

A list of Agencies, Organizations and Persons Contacted regarding this proposal is provided, along with a brief overview of comments/feedback received and how they were considered.

### Implementation Date

I intend to implement the decision immediately.

### Administrative Review

Decisions that are categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement are not subject to an administrative review process (Agriculture Act of 2014 [Pub. L. No. 113-79], Subtitle A, Sec. 8006).

### Contact

Roy Walker, Partnership Coordinator, PO Box 909, Jahn Day, OR, 97845, roy.walker@usda.gov, 541-575-3039

CRAIG TRULOCK

Forest Supervisor

6/16/21 Select date




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### Categorical Exclusion Review

#### Project Information

**Proposal Name:** Parish Grooming Shed

**Proposal Date:** 2/10/2021

**Project Contact:** Roy Walker for Grant County Snowballers

**Responsible Official:** Craig Trulock, Forest Supervisor

**Unit:** Malheur National Forest

**Ranger District:** Blue Mountain

**Counties:** Grant

**State:** OR

**Anticipated Implementation:** 04/05/2021 is the date of grant submission.

**Signing Authority:** District Ranger

**Public web link:** <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=59583>

**General Location:** Parish Seed Orchard

**Applicable Management Areas:** General Forest and Visual Corridor

**Legal Description:** T. 16 S., R. 33 E., Sec 21, center

**Elevation Range:** 4974

**Watersheds:** Upper Bear Creek Subwatershed - HUC 171200020201

#### Applicable Categories

This proposal is categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement because it fits the following category or categories, pending extraordinary circumstance determinations:

**Applicable Category or Categories:**

36 CFR 220.6(e)(22) (DM Required)

This category is applicable for this project because construction of a groomer shed at the seed orchard falls within the intent of Category 22. The shed will provide infrastructure to continue snowmobile access on the Forest and thereby providing winter recreation opportunities on the Malheur National Forest.

#### Proposed Action

The Grant County Snowballers is a local snowmobile club that encourages and supports winter recreation opportunities on the Malheur NF and surrounding Grant County. The club has an agreement with the Malheur NF to groom and maintain approved snowmobile trails. They groom over 300 miles of snowmobile trails on both the Prairie City RD and the Blue Mtn. RD. They receive funds through grants from Oregon State Parks to help purchase groomers and to purchase groomer sheds. They received



Oregon State Parks funds to purchase a new groomer this year that will focus work from Logan Valley to the west to Starr Sno-Park. These groomers are very expensive and to reduce wear and tear, it's best to store them out of the weather. The club plans to apply for Oregon State Park grant in April to purchase and build a new shed at the Parish site. To be successful in their grant they need an approved location to site the groomer shed.

The proposed grooming shed would be a 40 by 60 foot pole style building with radiant heat cement floor, and 18 foot roll up doors on both ends. The access road is the 569 Road off of the 16 road. A 20' X 20' area of gravel will be placed outside the building for vehicle parking. A portable generator would be used for the radiant heat floors.

## Project Maps







## Environmental Analysis

### National Forest Management Act (NFMA) - Land Management Plan Consistency

The pertinent specialists have reviewed the proposal, incorporating specific **Error! Reference source not found.** listed above to ensure consistency with applicable land management plan direction. The following summarizes the analysis and conclusions supporting plan consistency.

**Botany:** The project area is in a previously disturbed site, and no sensitive or federally-listed plants are expected in this area. No invasive plants are documented in the proposed project area. PDCs including cleaning heavy equipment that leaves the road and avoiding driving through invasive patches will minimize impacts from invasive plants.

**Cultural/Heritage:** The shed and graveled parking area will be entirely located on previous ground in the access road and equipment staging area adjacent to the seed orchard. No previously undisturbed ground will be impacted during construction. No impacts to cultural resources expected since project impacts will be limited to previously disturbed areas.

**Engineering:** It is the responsibility of the Snowballers to fund and perform all maintenance of the facility and comply with all regulations

**Fisheries:** There are no T&E fish in the vicinity of the project. Project will occur outside of the RHCA Category 1 buffer around Bear and Little Bear Creeks, which contains the native redband trout. These buffers will avoid direct impacts to the streams and minimize sediment input. Project would not prevent or retard the attainment of INFISH Riparian Management Objectives for native fish.

**Fuels:** There is no creation of slash. Therefore, there are no effects to fuel loading or fire behavior.

**Hydrology:** Project will occur outside of RHCA Category 1 buffers around Little Bear and Bear Creeks. These buffers will minimize sediment inputs and meet the intent of the Clean Water Act.

**Lands and Special Uses:** If proposal is to be authorized under a special use authorization, an authorization would need to be obtained prior to conducting the proposed use, including construction activities on NFSs (per CFR 251.50 (a)). No lands special uses were identified within the project area.

**Minerals:** No effect to mine claims. No effect to mineral material sites.

**Range:** No effect to grazing permit management.

**Recreation:** This project benefits recreation resources for winter use and does not prevent any current or future recreation uses.

**Scenic Resources:** The proposed groomer shed location is within Management Area 14, 16 Road Visual Corridor (Foreground) which is identified as Visual Quality Objective of Retention. The actual building location is out of view from the 16 Road due to how the terrain lays in the area. Therefore, the site still meets the Visual Quality Objective of Retention. The building will be visible from outside of foreground so to meet partial retention the building color needs to be earth tones such as light brown, light green or light grey.

**Soils:** Proposed location is in a previously disturbed site, so the soil has already been disturbed by past activities. No issues or concerns for soils regarding this specific location.

**Silviculture:** Proposed shed location is adjacent to the Parish Cabin seed orchard. An area has been cleared around the perimeter of the seed orchard to allow vehicle access for fence maintenance or to



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facilitate cone collection. This cleared area or 20 feet, whichever is wider should be maintained between the proposed grooming shed and parking area.

**Special Management Areas:** None

**Wildlife:** The proposed shed location is in a previously disturbed site with no critical habitat for T&E, sensitive or MIS species. Any wildlife species present may be temporarily disturbed and displaced during construction or maintenance activities.

## Other Law, Regulation and Policy Consistency

**The following laws, regulations, or policies pertinent to this project include:**

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### Clean Air Act

There is no burning proposed in this project, therefore no impact to the Clean Air Act due to smoke.

### Table 1. Applicable project file documentation to support Clean Air Act compliance

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#### Clean Water Act

The project avoids riparian areas and occurs outside of the 300' INFISH buffer. This buffer will minimize any sediment that might be mobilized during construction from delivery to the stream.

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#### Endangered Species Act - Threatened, Endangered, Proposed and Candidate Species and Critical Habitat

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##### *Species with a Determination of No Effect:*

Whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*): no habitat for this species occurs in this area, so no effects are expected.

No T&E wildlife species or habitat occurs in the immediate area, no effects are expected.

No T&E fish species within the watershed

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#### Sensitive Species (FSM 2670)

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##### *Species with a Determination of No Impact:*

Redband Trout: Avoidance of the RHCA will minimize any potential effect to redband trout.

No sensitive wildlife species or habitat occur in the immediate vicinity, no impact expected.

No sensitive plants or their habitat are occur in the project area, so we expect no impact.

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#### National Historic Preservation Act – Section 106 Review

No potential to cause effects - 36 CFR 800.3(a)(1). The proposal is a type of activity that does not have the potential to cause effects on any kind of prehistoric or historic resource, even if such resources were in the project area.

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#### Comments

Project impacts will be limited to previously disturbed ground associated with the existing seed orchard and access road.





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### Government to Government Consultation (EO 13175)

The responsible official identified the following regarding Government to Government consultation:

Government to Government Tribal consultation completed

#### *Comments*

Letters were mailed on March 4, 2021 to:

- Burns Paiute Tribe
- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
- Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation

No concerns were raised.

#### *Supporting Project Documentation*

**Table 2. Applicable project file documentation to support Tribal consultation compliance**

Supporting Documentation	File Name(s) / Link
Formal Letters of Consultation	<a href="#">Box\BMRD Project Records\BMCE\FY2021 CEs\6-GroomerShed\Scoping and Collaboration</a>

#### Relevant Executive Orders

The responsible official determined the proposal complies with the following Executive Orders, which were deemed relevant based on the nature of the proposal.

Below is a list of Executive Orders that typically apply to Forest Service proposals. Links to all Executive Orders can be found in the [Federal Register](https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/disposition) (<https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/disposition>).

EO 11988, Floodplain Management – requires determination of action occurring in a floodplain, using HUD floodplain map or more detailed map if available.

Project will occur outside of floodplain.

EO 11990, Protection of Wetlands – avoid actions within wetlands unless there are no practical alternatives, and the action includes all practicable means to minimize harm to wetlands.

Project will not occur within a wetland.

EO 13007, Indian Sacred Sites – avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of these sites.

No known American Indian sacred sites.

EO 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments - agencies consult with Indian tribes and respect tribal sovereignty as they develop policy on issues that impact Indian communities.

Completed in March 2021.

EO 13112, Invasive Species – prevent the introduction of invasive species and provide for their control and to minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts that invasive species cause.



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Standard operating procedures including cleaning of equipment before entering forest system lands and monitoring would be included in the agreement to comply with EO 13112.

EO 13186, Migratory Birds – identify actions that may have a measurable negative effect on migratory bird populations.

The proposed activities would not have any measurable effect on migratory bird populations or habitat.



## Extraordinary Circumstance Determinations

Pertinent specialists have reviewed the proposal and made the following determinations with regards to degree of effects for the resource conditions considered:

**Table 3. Resource conditions considered for extraordinary circumstance determinations**

Resource Conditions Considered for Extraordinary Circumstances	Is there a degree of potential effect that raises uncertainty over its significance? Briefly explain.
Federally listed threatened or endangered species, designated critical habitat, and Forest Service sensitive species	<p>Botany: N/A, not present Rationale for yes/no: No federally listed or sensitive plants or their habitat occur or are expected in the project area.</p> <p>Fisheries: NO, there is no uncertainty Rationale for yes/no: Project is small in scale, work will not occur in streams and is outside of the 300 foot riparian buffer (600' total).</p> <p>Wildlife: NO, there is no uncertainty Rationale for yes/no: No species or habitat occur within scale of the project.</p>
Floodplains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds	<p>NO, there is no uncertainty Rationale for yes/no: Project is small in scale and avoids work in or near riparian areas/floodplains.</p>
Congressionally designated areas, such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or national recreation areas	<p>N/A, not present Rationale for yes/no:</p>
Inventoried roadless areas	<p>N/A, not present Rationale for yes/no:</p>
Research natural areas	<p>N/A, not present Rationale for yes/no:</p>
American Indians and Alaska Native religious or cultural sites	<p>N/A, not present Rationale for yes/no: No known American Indian religious or cultural sites</p>
Archaeological sites, or historic properties or areas	<p>NO, there is no uncertainty Rationale for yes/no: Project impacts limited to previously disturbed ground</p>

## Supporting Project Documentation

**Table 4. Applicable project file documentation to support NEPA compliance**

Supporting Documentation	File Name(s) / Link
Project File	<a href="#">Box\BMRD Project Records\BMCE\FY2021 CEs\6-GroomerShed\Scoping and Collaboration</a>



## Agencies, Organizations and Persons Contacted

The responsible official contacted the following interested and affected agencies, organizations, and persons about this project.

Grant County Snowballers and Oregon State Snowmobile Association where both contacted about this project. The project was also listed in the Schedule of Proposed Actions starting March, 2021.

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